

---A Mourning PIECE---

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BEING A  
**DISCOURSE**

DELIVER'D

*At Brooklyn in Pomfret, October 22. 1754.*

With some Alterations.

Occasion'd by the much-lamented DEATH,

AND

delivered at the FUNERAL,

of the Reverend

Mr. *EPHRAIM AVERY*,

Pastor of the Church there.

Who expired on the 20th Instant, in the 42d  
Year of his Life, and 20th of his Ministry.

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By *EBENEZER DEVOTION*, A. M. *h*

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*The poor Worm calls us for her Inmates there ;  
And round us Deaths inexorable Hand  
Draws the dark Curtain close*————

Night-Thoughts.

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BOSTON: N. E.

Printed by J. DRAPER, 1755.

Sam<sup>l</sup> May his Book 1755

A Morning PIECE

The Gift of Capt Joseph Williams

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# Funeral Discourse.

JOB xvii. 13.

## *THE Grave is mine House.*

**T**HE sacred Scriptures make three grand Periods in Man's Existence. The first is the Time of the Continuance of Soul and Body in a State of Union with each other : the second, is the Time of their Separation, whilst the Body lies sleeping in the cold Arms of Death, and whilst the Soul having taken Wing, is lodg'd in the World of unbodied Spirits ; in a Region which we have but very imperfect Conceptions of : And the last commences at the Resurrection of the Body, when those ancient Partners, the Soul and Body, so long disjoin'd by Death, are reunited and fitted for Immortality.

'Tis the second of these Periods, which holy *Job* in the Bitterness of his Soul, is pointing at, in Expectation of

of finding a safe Retreat from the Storms, which beat so hard upon his earthly Tabernacle, that it shuddered and was ready to fall. *If I wait, the Grave is mine House.* It was the House appointed for Job, the common House for him and all the Living. *The Grave is mine House.*

As the Expression is metaphorical, so the general Design of the following Discourse, is to shew the Aptness of the Metaphor, and point out a few Things which are naturally suggested thereby.

In doing this I shall

- I. Say something of the Inhabitant of this House.
- II. Something of the Resemblance of this House, the Grave, to a House in it's proper Sense.
- III. Shew something of the Duty, and Advantage of familiarizing the Thoughts of Death. And
- IV. Apply these Thoughts, while we turn our Eyes upon the dear Remains of our departed Friend, which is about to enter the common Dwelling, and be lodg'd at it's long Home. — The Theme is gloomy, but the mournful Occasion will more than apologize for it.

I. The First Thing then, which bespeaks our Meditation, is the *Inhabitant* of this House. For this House is not to be consider'd without the Inhabitant. — Now the Inhabitant of this House, is but the earthy Part of Man, which while in it's first State of Existence, is actuated by a Soul, and in its Reference to the Soul is sometimes itself call'd a House, an earthly Tabernacle.

I was



'Twas in it's Original made out of the Earth. But the Divine Artificer who form'd it, breath'd into it the Breath of Life; and probably gave such a Ballance to the Humours of the Body, as to make it immortal, had that Ballance been maintain'd. But Man eat of the Fruit, concerning which, the LORD GOD had said, Thou shalt not eat; and so became a dying Man.— Whether there was some poisonous Quality in the forbidden Fruit, which naturally disorder'd the Blood, and ingender'd Diseases, or whether the Death which was consequent upon eating, was merely the Fruit of the Curse, is not necessary to be determin'd; but Man, *i. e.* his Body became mortal upon it, and a Separation follows between Soul and Body. The Body thus separated, becomes the Inhabitant of the Grave, the House I am speaking of. This Body which we now feed and cloathe with so much Care and Art, which we treat as tho' it were the better Part, or the whole of Man, and design'd to be immortaliz'd; is no sooner depriv'd of that Particle of Life, which the Maker of it breath'd into it; but it becomes at once the Inhabitant of this House. Those Bodies which now shine in the Pride and Beauty of Youth, will little more than change their Features, and enter the dark Abode: Like others, they'll soon become the Inhabitants of the Grave. Those Bodies which excell in Strength and Activity, when under the Arrests of some raging Distemper, or at most, when tepid Age comes on, loose their Strength and Activity, and presently shift their Lodgings, and retire to the Grave, the common Receptacle.

These Bodies, which are now desirable, and minister Satisfaction to those with whom they are associated; and perhaps to all that behold them, and now swell the Number of the living, will soon become the pale Inhabitants of the Grave, and increase the Congregation

of the Dead. Now they are abundantly fed and nourish'd; but then they are to be fed upon, even of Worms, until they are reduc'd to their pristine Dust. Now perhaps, they are distinguish'd from others, in a thousand Circumstances of Ease and Comfort and Honour: But in this common Dwelling all the Inhabitants are upon a level; there the Rich and the Poor meet together; the Distinction of high and low, great and small, is quite lost, and all the temporary Distinctions, which Nature and Providence had made, are done away. Death equals the Bodies of Kings, with those of Peasants: *Sceptra Ligonibus equat*, the Sceptre and the Spade are undistinguish'd. In this view of our Bodies, we may well cry out in the Language of Inspiration, \* *All Flesh is Grass, and all the Goodliness thereof is as the Flower of the Field.*

I pass to the second Thing proposed,

II. I shall say something of the *Analogy, or Resemblance*, between this House, the Grave, and a House properly so call'd—

I. Our Houses here above Ground, are our Dwelling-Places; so is the Grave to it's Inhabitant. Man in the first Period of his Existence, has no so constant Place of Residence, as the pale Inhabitant of the Grave has in it's dark Abode. Men of the most settled Abode in Life, whose Houses are with Propriety call'd their Dwelling-Places, move from Place to Place, impatient of Confinement. Not so is it with him that goes down to the Grave; he rises up no more, for Years and Ages to come. Death has lock'd up all his Senses, iron Sleep has bound his Limbs, and he dreams no more of En-

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\* *Isai. xl. 6.*



largement; but rests in his House until the Resurrection.  
† *For the Lord changeth his Countenance, and sendeth him away. Man lieth down and riseth not, until the Heavens be no more.*

2. Our Houses here are our Defence against external Injuries; so is the Grave to it's Inhabitant. While we live, our Houses are our Castles; there we flee from the Violence of Men, from the Storm, and from all the Injuries of the Weather. So the Grave is a sure Defence to it's Inhabitants, against every such threatening Evil. Tempests which sweep off stately Buildings, and lay whole Forests waste, pass away, and leave the Inhabitant of the Valley unmolested in his dark Abode. There also he rests secure from the Violence of Men, nor hears the Voice of the Oppressor.—*Why died I not from the Womb?* says Job, *for now should I have lien still, and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at Rest; with Kings and Counsellors of the Earth: There the Wicked cease from troubling; and there the Weary are at Rest: And there they hear not the Voice of the Oppressor.* The Body in Partnership with the Soul, before it has enter'd this House, is liable to a thousand Mischiefs, which no Lodging on this side the Grave can effectually guard against: Some arising from the Malignity of Men, and some from natural Evils. Here the Wicked cease not from troubling, but vent their Malice and Envy and Wrath; whence proceed Losses and Wounds, and Poverty and blasted Characters. Here also natural Evils, War, Pestilence, Famine, Disappointment and Pains, and hard Severities and Sufferings await us. But from such Mischiefs the Grave is a sure Defence——Malice and Envy are chiefly levell'd against the Objects that are present, their pointed Shafts don't usually pierce the Gloom

† Job xiv. 12, 20.

which covers the Grave. Indeed, what is there in this House for Malice and Envy, those thousand-headed Beasts, to prey upon? There's nothing that can offend, there's nothing to be desired; a quiet, unenterprising, harmless Inhabitant, and a lowly Cottage. There are no gaudy Trappings to tempt the Eyes of Envy; hence says Job, *I have made my Bed in Darkneſs.* This Dwelling boasts no other Furniture, than the Napkin and the Shroud; so the Inhabitant rests secure from the malicious and invidious Eye. Neither can natural Evils disturb it's Rest; those Evils which mix themselves with all humane Affairs, and throw out Losses and Disappointments, Hunger and Thirst, Poverty and Pain, promiscuously upon Mankind, can no Way affect the Rest and Security of him who goes down to the Grave. For, 'tis there the Weary are at Rest, 'tis there, as in a House, yea as in a strong Fortrefſ, they may rest secure in their Beds until the Resurrection.

3. As our Houses are especially the Places to which we retire, when Night comes on; so the Grave is the Place, to which the Inhabitant is confin'd, only during the Night Season. As Day is to the Night, so is Life to Death. Hence the Time of Life is oft-times call'd a Day, and Death as frequently call'd Night. Agreeably our Saviour says, *I must work the Works of him that sent me, whilst it is Day, the Night cometh when no Man can work.\** The weary Labourer, when Night comes on retires to his House for Repose. † *Man goeth forth to his Labour until Evening.* The Evening closes the Day, finishes his Work and shuts him up within Doors: so Death, closes the Day of Life, shuts up the Body in it's House the Grave, where there is no Work to be done. The Labours and Fatigues of the Day are over, and the

\* Joh. 9. 4. † Plaf. 104. 23.



Inhabitant will rest in it's dark Retirement, until the opening of another Day.

I proceed.

III. To shew something of the Duty and Advantage of familiarizing the Thoughts of Death.—It certainly becomes such Creatures as Men to familiarize Death. Thus did Job, when he said, *the Grave is mine House*, he talks of the Grave as one at Home—Yea he was as one free among the dead, when in our Context he says to Corruption, *thou art my Father : to the Worm, thou art my Mother, and my Sister*. And as we are in a very little Time to enter upon the State of the Dead, 'twill probably turn to very good Account, to familiarize the Thoughts of it to ourselves. Frequently to take a turn among the Graves, is a very good Expedient to prepare us for a Lodging there. The Man who allows himself to think freely and frequently upon Death, must look upon it to be infinite in it's Consequence, that everlasting Happiness or Misery will be consequent upon it ; and also that his Happiness or Misery, will be very much proportioned to his Conduct here. He can't look upon it as he does upon the little Changes of Life ; but must look upon it as the greatest Event, both in it's Nature and Consequence, that will ever happen unto him, and be proportionably affected by it. When he sees that his Lusts and Corruptions must be mortify'd, that every evil Affection must be subdued, before he can be in any Capacity for avoiding Hell, or relishing the Enjoyments of Heaven, a certain Passage to one of which Death opens to him ; it will be his daily Prayer and his hearty Endeavour, to get every Lust subdued. And when he is left to commit any Sin, he can't in the frequent Views of Death rest content, until he is renew'd again by Repentance. The Man who has frequent Views of Death,

will most probably live becoming his Character as a Man, *i. e.* as a mortal and accountable Being. 'Tis hence his Duty and Advantage to familiarize the Tho'ts of Death. This he should remember frequently, that our Original was from the Dust, and that we are hastning to it again; that we were born to die, and are continually liable to Death. In Proof of it we may read the divine Warrant, and the Monthly Bills of Mortality, or turn our Eyes inward, and consult our own Frame, and mark the Decays of Nature.—There is not one of us that doubts his own Mortality; and yet but very few familiarize the Thought. We are ready to put far away the evil Day, and think 'tis soon enough hereafter. Death is the Enemy of our Natures, and we are apt to treat it as One we could avoid, by keeping at the utmost Remove from it. But since nothing can screen us from it; it were well to familiarize the Thought of it's Approach; to bring near the Prospects of Death, and to endeavour frequently to put ourselves in the Place of the dying Man; to conceive ourselves standing upon the last Borders of Time, just launching forth into Eternity, now struggling with some malignant Disease; and now engaging the cruel Tyrant; now feeling the Agonies, the Pangs and Struggles of Death; now our Hands grow feeble, our Eyes dim, and our Breath short; the last Sands of our Glass running, and but few Moments divide us from the eternal World: And now alas! Life expires, the fatal Blow is struck; Coldness, Ghastliness and Death, have seized upon every Member, our Bodies lying lifeless, and Captives to the King of Terrors; and however choice and tender we have been of them, will presently rot and mix with common Earth. But lo! the Soul now dislodg'd from the Body, takes Wing, and flies swift, into the World of unbodied Spirits, and to GOD it's Maker and it's Judge, to receive a final Absolution from Sin and Suffering, or an Assign-



Assignment to endless Torment. Thus to familiarize Death, by endeavouring to realize and bring it near, certainly becomes such Creatures as we are, who are certain of scarcely any Thing but Death. Thus to do, is our Duty and Advantage, as 'tis one of the most powerful Arguments a Man can use with himself, to live becoming his Character and Relation, and to do the Business of the Day in the Day. 'Tis scarcely possible, for the Man who believes a future State of Rewards and Punishments, and the inseperable Connection which there is between Virtue and Reward, Sin and Suffering, to sin freely, whilst he thinks freely and frequently of Death; scarcely possible for him, to abandon himself to his Lust, and sin with the full Consent of his Will, whilst he looks upon himself a mortal and accountable Being. Most certainly the Man that goes freely and fully into any known Sin, is so far from familiarizing the Thoughts of Death, and the State which Death ushers the Soul into; that he either in Heart denies, that there is any Difference between moral Good and Evil; or else denies the certain and unalterable Relation and Connection, which there is on one Hand, between moral and natural Good; and on the other, between moral and natural Evil; or else disbelieves the Being of a God; or else (which is eventually the same Thing) denies some of the Perfections of his Nature; or else as the last Retreat, he promises himself Impunity, from the Expectation of ceasing from Existence, and tumbling into nothing more than Dust, when Death arrests him. Into one or other, or all of these unsafe uncomfortable Hiding-places, an unrestrain'd voluntary Course of Sin, must drive the Sinner. But the familiarizing of Death, has a happy Tendency to prevent the Source of all these desperate and horrid Conclusions; and to make the Man a holier and better Man, and to fit him for that new and untry'd State of Existence, to which Death is but a short Passage and Introduction.

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Upon the whole, 'Tis our Duty and our Interest, to keep in our Minds a fresh Sense that we are mortal and accountable, and to offer so much violence to Nature, as to use some Freedom and Familiarity with it's Destroyer and last Enemy, saying to the Grave, *thou art my House; to Corruption, and the Worm, my Mother, and my Sister.*

I proceed now to the last Thing propos'd, viz.

IV. To apply the foregoing Hints.—Here

1st. Is the Grave our House and the common Dwelling for all the Living? How foolish are they who live as though they were to live here forever? And this do all they who live thoughtless of Death, unconcern'd about it, and unprepar'd for it: Who practically say, to Morrow shall be as this Day, and much more abundant. We must remove our Habitation whether we will or no, and tho' our Thoughtlessness about it, may put off all Preparation for it, yet it can't delay the Time of Death's Approach. \* *If the evil Servant say in his Heart, my Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the Men-servants, and the Maid-servants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the Lord of that Servant will come in a Day when he looks not for him, and at an Hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his Portion with the Unbelievers.* When we treat this present Living as our only Place of Abode, we treat it as being what it is not, and deny it to be what it is; and in Consequence of it (like Fools) we suffer ourselves to be shamefully impos'd upon and deceiv'd. To treat this Life and the Things of it, as being what they are, is to take St. Paul's Direction, *to rejoyce as though we rejoyced not, and buy, as though we possess'd not; to*

\* Luke 12. 45. 46.



improve and enjoy Life, and all the Comforts and Advantages of it, in a Subordination to a future State of Existence; looking upon the present State, only as a Nursery to another, into which we are shortly to be transplanted. But to look upon the present State of Things, and treat it as tho' we were always to stand in the same Relation thereto, which we now do; will needs put us upon a very silly and dangerous Plan of Action, and betray the greatest Folly. The Fabrick, this World, can't last always, but must give Way to all-devouring Time; the World and the Things of it are passing away, and we are passing therewith, and that very swiftly too. When *\* the Day of the Lord shall come as a Thief in the Night, the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also and the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these Things shall be dissolv'd, what Manner of Persons ought ye to be, in all holy Conversation and Godliness, looking for, and hastning unto the coming of the Day of God, &c.* Seeing the present Frame is not to last forever, and especially seeing, whilst it does last, the Grave is by Way of Eminence our House, it is the extreamest Folly, to live as tho' we were to live here forever.

2. Is the Grave our House? We are not to imagine Ourselves or our dear Friends are at Home, until such Time, as We or They are got into this House. 'Tis our great Infelicity to think Ourselves and our Friends at Home, whilst we are join'd to the Number of the Living, and are rejoycing together in the World. The Mistake is great and very unhappy: for hence it comes to pass, that we are surpriz'd and overwhelm'd with Grief, and ready to sink under the Burthen, when a

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\* 2 Peter 3. 10, 11, 12.

Friend goes to his long Home. Whereas did we look upon ourselves as Way-faring Men, and upon our Friends as only making us a short and friendly Visit, in their hasty Passage a-cross the Stage, we could with more Freedom take leave, when they bid us farewell, and retire Home. Let us not think ourselves at Home whilst in the Body; and when call'd to part with our Friends, remember that we are all shortly to meet in the common Dwelling.

3. Is the Grave our House? is it Our long Home? We may learn what Sort of Treatment is due to the crazy Houses, the clay Tabernacles, which we carry about with us. Our Bodies, which are to be the Inhabitants of the Grave, are here called our Houses. But since the Grave by Way of Eminence is call'd our House, our present House is of short Continuance, and so not to be the Object of our first and chief Concern. 'Tis only to be kept decent and tenentable; the Breaches to be repair'd, and a Prop put underneath here and there, to keep it a while from tumbling down. But little to be expended upon it, in rendering of it splendid and gaudy.

4. Is the Grave our House? Let us look into it, now 'tis open, and get acquainted with it. The Gates of the Grave are this Day wide open, to receive the Treasure we could poorly part with. Let us look into it and see whereto all Glory comes.—Ah! How humble the Cottage, how lowly the Dwelling! Among the Clods of the Valley, among Worms, yea, and beneath the Feet of Clowns.—How dark too! When the Door is shut, not one Beam of Light can ever enter. Here sets a horrid Gloom. 'Tis truly a *dark Valley*. Sevenfold Night and Darknefs cover the Grave.—How silent this House! Far from the Reach of Noise. A Land in which there



there is no Sound of Musick ; so much as the Voice of the Turtle is never heard. The Voice of ancient Friends, and the Voice of the Oppressor cease alike. Here the Cries of the distress'd, and the Alarms of War will never come. Here sits perfect Silence, and here 'twill reign ; until jarring Elements, and the Sound of the last Trumpet, shall call the dead to Life. Whilst we thus look into the Grave ; Lord, so prepare us to take up our Lodgings in it, *that when our Days shall be past, our Purposes broken off, even the Thoughts of our Hearts, when we shall go down to the Bars of the Pit, and our Rest together shall be in the Dust ;* we may sleep in JESUS, and anon, awake to a blessed and happy Immortality.

Here I must leave my Subject, but not my Discourse. For upon this mournful, this solemn Occasion, Friendship and Faithfulness, oblige me to say something of him whose Obsequies we are this Day attending. And then to address myself, to two or three Sorts of Persons, who are more immediately touch'd, by the Hand of God in this Providence.

Concerning him, the Rev'd Mr. EPHRAIM AVERY, late Pastor of this Flock. I must pass over the first Part of his Life, in which he had gain'd the Esteem of all good Judges that were acquainted with him : And only draw his Character in Miniature, confining myself to the Time of his publick Ministry ; which was the Time of my very intimate Acquaintance with him. During this Time, he appear'd with a peculiar Lustre, in the various Relations of Life which he sustain'd. — As to his natural Endowments ; He was calm, peaceable, patient, open-hearted, free of Access, sociable, hospitable, chearful, but not vain, capable of unshaken Friendship, not a Wit, but very judicious, not of the most ready and quick Thought, but very penetrating, capable of viewing the

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Relations of Things, comparing of them, and drawing just Conclusions from them. In a Word, the Author of Nature had dealt out with a liberal Hand, to him, Humanity and good Sense.

As to his Acquirements in Learning: He was esteem'd of the best Judges among his Acquaintance, a good Scholar in general, a good Divine, and no small Proficient in several of the liberal Sciences.——In private Life, He was a good Oeconomist, a hearty, fast, undisguis'd Friend; no less so in Adversity than Prosperity, wherever he made Pretensions to it. Not invidious, nor capable of dissembling Friendship. Equal and just to all.

In his Family he was the courteous, obliging, tender Husband, the kind provident, and exemplary Father.

As a private Christian, those who have been most intimately acquainted with him, are Witnesses of that Humanity, Temperance, Sobriety, Gravity, Sincerity, Openness and Honesty, Benevolence and Charity, which have appear'd in him, and which are the Character and Ornament of a Christian.

As a Minister of Christ; He was an Example to his Flock: His Preaching was judicious and pungent, well adapted to enlighten the Understanding, convince the Judgment, and reform the Life: It was his Study to show Himself approv'd unto God, a Workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth; and his Care to feed his People with Knowledge and Understanding.

Such was he, but is no more. The cruel Tyrant has taken him off, and the Grave is waiting for his Body, whilst his Spirit is hopefully solacing itself, in the Embraces



braces of Divine Love, and is receiving the Crown in yonder World; even the Crown of Glory, which God the righteous Judge will bestow upon his faithful Servants; a Crown which in his last Sickness, he was earnestly looking and longing for, and patiently waiting in Expectation of: He is leaving our longing Eyes, never more to be beheld by us; the Body is going to the Grave it's House, it's long Home. So long as Life shall keep the Distance between him and us, we shall miss him, and mourn his Absence.

But as the Loss is peculiarly great, and the Providence very speaking to two or three Sort of Persons, so I shall particularly address myself to them.—And,

1<sup>st</sup>. To them that are most nearly and sensibly touch'd by it, *viz.* the bereaved Widow, and the Fatherless Children.

Dear MADAM; We condole with you, and your dear Offspring, under the heavy Hand of Heaven which is stretched out upon you. The Stroke, the \* repeated Strokes of Providence are heavy, and the Wounds deep. GOD has dealt out lighter Afflictions first of all, and then heavier to you, until last of all he has put far from you Lover and Friend, and your Acquaintance into Darkness. That which was the most dear of any earthly Treasure, has he taken from you, even the Delight of your Eyes with a Stroke. His Providences are marvellous, his Judgments are past our finding out; the Loss is irreparably great by any Thing of an earthly Kind, and the Distress I am sensible, is, as when one giveth up the Ghost.

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\* Within a few Weeks the Widow had lost her Brother and her Son.

BUT, MADAM, be not overwhelm'd : Look upon the sad Catastrophe in all it's References. Remember that the GOD of Ages lives ; a Being immeasurable in his Views, and who keeps always in his Sight the most distant Periods of Time, and in the Progress of his Providence acts one consistent Part throughout the whole. And tho' whilst we look upon a single Point, or only upon one or two Steps of Divine Providence, we are puzzel'd and bewilder'd and loose Sight of infinite Wisdom and Goodness : Yet remember, that Being who sees from one End of his Work to the other, and takes into one View the whole Series of Causes and Events, may see, and does see, a perfect Harmony, and consummate Wisdom and Beauty in the whole. A single Providence, or two, which without their References to other Providences, would look like Caprice and Humour, the Effects of Chance, or the Sportings of Fortune, all out of joint ; yet taken with their proper References, they may answer the most noble Purposes, infinitely worthy of Him, who sits at Helm, and rolls the Times along. He takes in whole Ages at a single Glance. And to such a Mind, the Mysteries of Providence may make no Chasm in the wondrous Plan. He who sees thro' all Time, and orders every Event, is always carrying on the same noble Purposes, and conducting all Things, with a steady Hand to their proper Period. Not a Movement in the whole Circle of Existence, but what has it's proper Dependences, and certain Effects. — Tho' you may with humble Importunity, inquire of GOD and say, Wherefore is it that thou contendest with me ? yet remember that GOD is sovereign, and has a Right to deal with you as he will : Yea to deal with a perfectly innocent Being as he will ; only so as not to make him more miserable than happy, upon the whole of his Existence. A calming, quieting Thought this, to those who have their Minds attemper'd to the divine Mind. But notwith-

stand-



standing his Sovereignty, his Ways are all equal and just. In this therefore rest content ; that all the Dispensations of his Providence however adverse, are the Result of unerring Wisdom, and unfailing Goodness, and what upon the whole is best.

In your disconsolate Estate GOD grant you his comforting Presence ; be your Head and Husband, and cause Light to arise to you in Darkness.

And may a double Portion of the Spirit of the deceased Father, rest upon his Sons ; a Blessing upon all his Children, and the Portion of *Jacob* be their Portion forever.

2. To my Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry.

My Fathers and Brethren. The Hand of GOD hath touched us, and the Wound is so sensible to me, that I had much rather to have taken my Place, in the silent Train of Mourners, than to have been your Monitor and Mouth to Day. — This forsaken Desk, this Mourning Assembly, but especially the breathless Clay of my Acquaintance, my Brother, my Friend, that lies before our Eyes ; speak a thousand Things to me, which cover my Mind with Gloominess and Melancholly : Inasmuch that 'tis offering Violence to Nature, to perform this Task.

Nevertheless, since Providence will have it so, let me say what Providence directs.

This mournful, this solemn Occasion, my Fathers and Brethren, tells us that we are mortal and must die. Our Brother, who was most dear to us, and useful among us, who had our Prayers and our Heart's Desire, that he might live and be extensively useful to the Church of GOD

GOD : Our Brother who had Health and Strength a few Weeks ago, and the same Prospect of Life, that the most healthy of us all have ; has shut his Eyes upon us, and is gone to the Congregation of the Dead, where our Eyes that have seen him, shall see him no more.

This Language of Providence is very emphatick, and tells us that we shall die, and must die soon. And this admonisheth us farther, to work hard and encrease our Diligence in the Vineyard of CHRIST. 'Tis a Token that Night is at Hand, when the Labourers are call'd Home ; and altho' the Night is at Hand, we have much Work lying before us ; for the Harvest is great, tho' the Labourers are few, and growing fewer. It certainly behoves us, notwithstanding all the Discouragements lying before us, to press forward and continue faithful in our Work, until the Night comes, that at the Close of Life, we may receive the Reward of faithful Servants.

3. To the Church and Flock of GOD, who are now left as Sheep, having no Shepherd.

We desire to condole with you under the sore Rebukes of Heaven upon you. GOD has visited you with a Series of Judgments, of late, has swept away a Multitude of your Friends and Relations, and last of all has call'd Home his Servant, your Head and Pastor. And GOD is yet contending with you by Sickness, his Hand is stretched out still. It certainly becomes you to humble yourselves under his mighty Hand, and to make diligent Inquiry, wherefore it is that the LORD is thus contending with you. Many Times the Reason of God's Controversy is manifest, by the Kind of Punishment which he inflicts. Therefore, when he takes off by Death the rising Generation, make diligent Inquiry whether you have not provoked him to it, by a criminal Neglect or Conduct



Conduct towards them. Have not you let loose the Reins of Government? Have not your *Children made themselves vile, and you restrained them not?* Have not you neglected their Education, and been too parsimonious and strait-handed, in providing the Means of early Instruction for them; and hereby provok'd GOD to take them from you?

Inquire, have you not provok'd GOD, to call Home his Servant your Teacher; by your slighting his Counsel, disregarding his faithful Reproofs, and evil intreating of him? Such is the present Judgment, as may well suggest to you such Inquiries. Be faithful to yourselves in Accomplishing a diligent Search. Return to GOD by Repentance, that he may return to you in the Ways of Mercy, and build you up and set a faithful Watchman upon your Walls. Will the good Shepherd of *Israel*, who never slumbers nor sleeps, watch over and protect you! May he who leads *Joseph* as a Flock, lead you in the Paths of Righteousness and Peace, for his Name Sake!

Finally. May we all suitably lay to Heart the present visible Chastisement of divine Providence, and make ready for the great and terrible Day of the LORD; *for he cometh to judge the Earth, and he shall judge the World with Righteousness, and the People with his Truth. For behold he comes quickly, and his Reward is with him, so give to every Man according as his Work shall be.*

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T H E E N D.

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